First, we would like to thank the GUSA FinApp Committee for taking their time to hear our presentation and the $5,000 in funding that we were allocated. However, we originally asked for $10,000 from FinApp and received a $1,500 decrease from the amount of funding we received last year. Our program will suffer, and we will struggle, and possibly fail to service our students if this amount of funding decreases. In fact, because our program requires more funds in order to be successful, we would like to submit this appeal to the committee for an additional $2,500.

First we would like to address the issue FinApp had with our presentation regarding ELP and participant retention. The comments indicated that we planned to spend the majority of our funding on food, and that the committee wanted to see a more specific plan to increase our participant retention, so we would like to offer more detail on our plans for the program. GOLD, like most organizations, has transitioning leadership each fiscal year. The decisions made by the past coordinators regarding ELP were ones we felt certainly hurt the program and participant retention. As we stated in our presentation, the culmination of the ELP program is the retreat where we take our participants to experience community, interact hands-on with leadership skills, and solidify the mentor-mentee relationship with our family structures. However, we had to cut a retreat last fiscal year because of our lack of funding. Missing this retreat caused participant retention to drop last year, but it is a decision we will also have to make if we do not receive this additional funding. Our last retreat cost approximately $5,000, and we have already planned in the ELP budget for the upcoming year to set aside $2,000 for the ELP retreat. We have already taken the measures necessary to strengthen this program, however, we cannot suffice on our own. We fear that if we need to cut this retreat due to budget constraints like the last coordinators did, we will lose participants and will see similar results from the previous year.

Furthermore, ELP in 2016 was the most successful year to date with a 100% retention rate, and we have researched their program structure to improve upon our plan—this is why we stressed the need for a retreat and will be tailoring the program to the interests of the participants. Additionally, we have more than 40 applications for ELP every year, so there is still a demonstrated need and desire for this program; we anticipate that this demand will only increase as we restructure to focus on women’s leadership. This upcoming fiscal year, we are also planning to release our ELP application earlier in the academic year before classes have begun to engage with potential participants earlier on. We also plan to keep the application open all throughout CAB fair, and BLF CAB fair and utilize other organizations such as OWN IT, BRAVE, and GUWIL to help advertise our application and speak to students at interest meetings, in addition to holding our own interest meetings.

Something else used by the 2016 ELP program that we would like to implement is tailoring the program to the group’s specific interests and their intersections with leadership theories, instead of a broader introduction to leadership. During 2016, several mentor and mentee groups were able to participate in bi-weekly events such as dinners, volunteer opportunities, and local events that were centered around educational equity, diversity on a college campus, and servant leadership theories. With our program this upcoming year focusing on intersectional female leadership theory, we hope this tailored program to specific interests will increase participant retention as it did in 2016. Furthermore, in 2016 GOLD was able to pay for all of these events for each mentor ‘family’ covering transportation to local events and service opportunities, group meals, and on campus departmental speakers that were specific to the interests of the participants. We hope to do the same by bringing in speakers like Professor Park, the director of the Women’s and Gender Studies Program, Charlotte Klymer, a Georgetown alumni who is the secretary for rapid response at the Human Rights Campaign, and Sakasha Brown, an anti-gentrification and women’s empowerment advocate who is an alumni of Georgetown and GOLD. We also would like to pay for our participants to go to events like OWN IT and BRAVE where they can put their feminist leadership theories into action. With meals incorporated into our ELP programming, and paying for service opportunity transportation, as well as community building events, that cost was approximately $1,200 in 2016. However, we see this as a necessary cost to retain participants and retain the integrity of our program. In order to accomplish these goals, we would like to use $3,000 of the money that FinApp allocates us to build and support ELP.

Moreover, our program serves not just 8 students, but 40 first-years through our pre-orientation program (L&B), 20 more first years (with the exception of last year) through ELP, our alumni network with their existing mentor structure, and the wider campus community. We grew L&B from 34 participants to 40 in 2019 and would like to maintain, and/or grow that number in 2020, seeing as last year we had a 100% retention rate. We will require funding to feed and house those extra participants, as well as fund their community activities, and transportation to service initiatives, as well as bring in more speakers to keep the content of the program relevant and engaging for our incoming students. We will also need more time to prepare our mentors for a larger group of participants, and this will require more funding to feed and house our mentor team before and during programming. For this reason, we would allocate $2,000 of the funding FinApp would provide us towards growing L&B and maintaining the success of the program

We have also created a newsletter and have expanded our alumni network both on and off campus. We hope to take our participants to visit some of our local alumni to explore career and other professional leadership development opportunities. For example, we have alumni working at CNN, Brookings Institute, the FBI, and in Leadership consulting to name a few. Additionally, we have alumni on boards of many on campus organizations like GAAP, Reventón, The Georgetown Independent, and Hoya Saxa Weekend, which can help to extend our reach to many diverse parts of the Georgetown community. Campus programming events included leadership week, which is now Leadership 101, where we plan to bring in speakers like the ones aforementioned with $300 per speaker, as well as perform our own facilitations to introduce the greater campus community to our leadership theories and practices. In order to continue connecting with our strong base of alumni and to increase this expansion into the Georgetown community, we would allocate $1,000 of the funding we receive from FinApp to these efforts.

Lastly, in our original presentation, we also mentioned the issue of coordinator salaries. We wanted to highlight that the CSE allocated $9,400 to GOLD for salaries for FY20 and, due to an excess of hours, the previous coordinators used $10,439.52 in total. Going forward we are taking steps to minimize the amount of hours we, as coordinators, can log by working with our advisor to create a detailed work plan going into the summer months. However, we anticipate needing to log similar hours to last year's coordinators, if not more, in order to successfully restructure ELP. Furthermore, because of the changes in CSE staff, we have a new advisor that is working very hard to ensure that GOLD continues to thrive, but in order to help her and take a stronger lead as coordinators, it is extremely important that we are able to be compensated fairly for all hours logged. We also have a smaller mentor team this year, which ultimately means that a greater burden falls on us to communicate with participants and curate their experience. Thus, we would ideally like $1,500 of the FinApp money that is allocated to us to contribute to this gap in salaries so that we can continue to work on participant retention and the growth of our signature programs.

Thank you for your time, interest in, and support of GOLD and the personalized experiences we provide to the Georgetown community. We look forward to presenting our points to the committee, and we hope you strongly consider our appeal.